

security cabinet is engageable with an automatic dispensing machine without exposing said security boxes.

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 13 and 16-19 are pending in this application. The applicant has canceled claims 14 and 15. The Examiner has indicated that claims 18 and 19 are allowed.

ALLOWABLE CLAIMS

The office action indicates that claims 5, 8, 9, and 11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all base claim limitations and any intervening claim limitations. The office action also indicates that claims 13-16 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112 ¶2 and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The applicant will rewrite claims 5, 8, 9, 11, and 13-16 accordingly should it still be necessary once the disposition of the base claims has been settled. The applicant has overcome all remaining objections and rejections against the subject application, as is more fully set forth below.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DRAWINGS

The office action objects to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because, according to the Action, the data exchange system, replenishment center, a delivery vehicle, male and female connectors on the containers and cabinet must be shown or the features canceled from the claims. In response, the applicant maintains that Figure 2 illustrates a data exchange device 30 and Figure 5 illustrates the male and female connectors. To more clearly show that communication can be performed with a delivery vehicle, a replenishment centre and an ATM, the applicant has added Figure 6 along with a corresponding Figure description. The disclosure of Figure 6 is supported both by Figure 2, which Figure 6 basically mimics, by claims 13 and 14 and by the final paragraph on page 2 of the application as published as WO 01/06464 where the paragraph spanning pages 2 and 3 indicates that the cabinet can communicate with other security systems, e.g., a cash cassette replenishment centre, a security system of a

specification, the applicant has included a corresponding amendment to the specification, which essentially repeats this information. The applicant maintains that these amendments place the drawings in acceptable form without adding new matter.

OBJECTIONS TO THE SPECIFICATION

The office action notes that the specification lacks section headings. The applicant has amended the specification to include section headings.

The office action notes that, on page 8, paragraph 5, line 1 of the specification, the word “an” should replace the word “and.” The applicant has amended the specification accordingly.

The office action objects to the specification for failing to provide antecedent basis for “sweeping means” recited in claim 11 and the “data exchange system” recited in claim 13. In response, the applicant maintains that the term “sweeping means” in claim 11 requires no antecedent because it is introduced in claim 11 with the indefinite article “a.” Similarly, the phrase “at least one” introduces the term “data exchange device” in claim 13. In light of this, please explain further the basis of this objection.

CLAIM REJECTIONS FOR INDEFINITENESS

The office action rejects claims 13-16 under 35 USC §112 ¶ 2 as being indefinite. Specifically, the office action indicates that claim 13 is unclear with respect to its reference to “other security systems.” According to the Action, the scope of this claim cannot be ascertained since the specification and drawings don’t describe or show the recited limitation or indicate how “other security systems” interact with the claimed invention and its function. In response, the applicant has amended claim 13 to replace “data exchange system” with the phrase “data exchange device”, which is the wording used on the first line of the final paragraph of page 2 of the application as filed. In addition the applicant has dealt with any ambiguity that might have otherwise remained over the use of the term “security systems,” by incorporating the limitations of claims 14 and 15 directly into claim 13. As such, claim 13 now explicitly describes each of the types of security systems and the application, as filed, clearly supports the limitation.

THE INVENTION

As recited in the amended claim 1, the invention is a mobile security cabinet for engagement with an automatic dispensing machine. The mobile security cabinet comprises a plurality of reception regions for receiving and engaging with containers, each container including a delivery unit for delivering a spoiling agent to spoil the contents of the container. The security cabinet further comprises at least one sensor for detecting an attempt to open the cabinet or an attempt to remove a container, and a controller responsive to the at least one sensor for initiating spoiling of the contents of the containers via the delivery unit. The cabinet further includes a pick unit that engages the mobile security cabinet with an automatic dispensing machine while the containers remain enclosed within the mobile security cabinet, the mobile security cabinet is received into engagement with an automatic dispensing machine, and the contents of the containers made available to the automatic dispensing machine via the pick unit.

The present invention further relates to a secure storage cabinet storing a plurality of cash cassettes for use within automatic teller machines (ATMs). The cabinet can be docked with an ATM without exposing the cassettes, so that the cassettes are always protected. The cassettes are always within a secure environment when being transported and exchanged. While inside the cabinet, a spoiling ink delivery system protects the cassettes. The spoiling ink delivery system spoils the contents of the cassettes in the event of a security breach, e.g., the door of the cabinet being opened in an unauthorized manner. When a cassette is loaded into the cabinet, a connector of the cassette engages with a connector of the spoiling ink delivery system of the cabinet in such a way as to displace foreign matter from a fluid flow path between the connectors, ensuring a fluid flow path that is free from obstruction. The cabinet further comprises a pick unit so that the whole cabinet can be inserted into the ATM, and the cabinet remains in the ATM during use of the ATM.

THE PRIOR ART

WO 93/02435 discloses a dispensing machine (such as an ATM) in which a number of cash cassettes may be stored and connected to a single spoiling ink delivery system (see page 5, lines 21-25, and page 15, lines 21-23). Each cassette comprises a

hole through which a nozzle may be inserted. The nozzle includes a conical tip to provide a fluid sealed path between the deliver system and the contents of the cassette (see page 19, lines 9-13).

The document does not describe a security cabinet containing a plurality of cash cassettes, which is dockable with an ATM for the secure exchange of cassettes. Instead, it describes an ATM that contains a plurality of cassettes.

On page 15, lines 23-25, the document discloses that the ATM is housed within a secure environment, such as a bank. Therefore, a secure exchange of ATM cash cassettes, for example, using a security cabinet according to the present invention, is not necessary. Furthermore, when the door of the ATM is open and the ATM is being loaded, the cash cassettes are not protected by the ATM spoiling fluid delivery system (see page 17, line 19-23). Thus the cassettes are both exposed and unprotected (although the ATM is in an allegedly secure environment). The present invention assumes that the ATM is within a non-secure environment. Thus, a security cabinet that is dockable with an ATM for exchanging cash cassettes, ensures that the cassettes are not exposed at any point.

CLAIMS 1-4, 6, 7, 10, 12, and 17; NOVELTY REJECTION

The office action rejects claims 1-4, 6, 7, 10, 12, and 17 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by WO 93/02435. According to the Action, this document discloses a system that satisfies each and every one of the limitations of these claims.

The applicant forwarded to the examiner a proposed amendment to claim 1 reciting for clearly that the containers remain enclosed within the mobile security cabinet and that the pick unit engages the mobile cabinet with an automatic dispensing machine. In a subsequent telephone interview conducted 16 January 2004 the applicant argued that the “remain enclosed” limitation was analogous to the recitation in claim 18 that the containers are delivered without opening the cash store, because they remain enclosed within the security cabinet. The applicant also argued that the “pick unit engages” limitation was neither shown nor suggested in WO 93/02435.

The examiner responded that, in his opinion, the “pick unit” limitation is taught by the reference page 1 lines 19-22 which does disclose an ATM – which is the automatic dispensing machine. The applicant agreed that the reference teaches an automatic dispensing machine and a pick unit, but pointed out that the examiner had identified the mobile security cabinet as being item 11 in Figure 1. The “pick unit” is delivery unit 20, which doesn’t connect the security cabinet 11 to the dispensing unit 12. It connects containers/cassettes 17, 18, 19 to the dispensing unit 12. Claim 1, as amended, describes a pick unit that connects an entire mobile cabinet to a dispensing unit rather than connecting individual cassettes to a dispensing unit as taught in the reference. The examiner agreed that this feature defines over the prior art, but that claim 1 should be amended to make clear that the mobile security cabinet is not an ATM cabinet. The applicant has so amended claim 1.

The applicant additionally argued that that, as claimed, the containers remain enclosed within the cabinet while the pick unit engages the cabinet with the dispensing machine. The examiner responded by arguing that this is also taught – that similar to what the applicant is claiming with regard to containers/cassettes being removable, WO 93/02435 discloses containers/cassettes that are removable and that also stay inside so that the contents of the container can be spoiled if needed. In responding to this argument, the applicant agreed that the reference teaches removable cassettes that can be spoiled if needed, but that what the reference doesn’t teach is containers or cassettes that remain enclosed within a mobile security cabinet while the pick unit engages the mobile security cabinet with a dispensing machine as claimed. Instead, the reference teaches cassettes 17, 18, 19 that are not enclosed within a security cabinet 11 until after they are inserted into the cabinet 11 and plugged into a delivery mechanism 20. At the close of the telephone interview the examiner said this limitation would define over the prior art if it were amended to make it clearer that the containers remain within the cabinet as the cabinet as the cabinet is being connected to or plugged into the ATM. The examiner indicated that the language, “remains enclosed . . . while the pick unit engages the cabinet with the dispensing machine” doesn’t clearly describe action. Apparently the phrase

“while the pick unit engages” isn’t sufficiently active and could be interpreted to mean a static state of being rather than an act.

In compliance with the examiner’s suggestions, the applicant has amended claim 1 to recite that the cabinet further includes a pick unit that engages the mobile security cabinet with an automatic dispensing machine while said containers remain enclosed within the mobile security cabinet, the mobile security cabinet is received into engagement with an automatic dispensing machine, and the contents of the containers made available to the automatic dispensing machine via the pick unit.

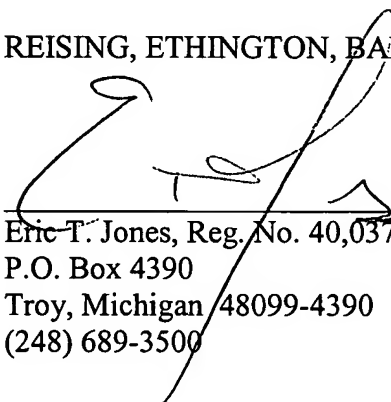
CONCLUSION

The applicant maintains that, as amended, claims 1-13 and 16-19 are in allowable form.

I authorize the Assistant Commissioner to charge any deficiencies, or credit any overpayment in connection with this communication to Deposit Account No. 59-0852. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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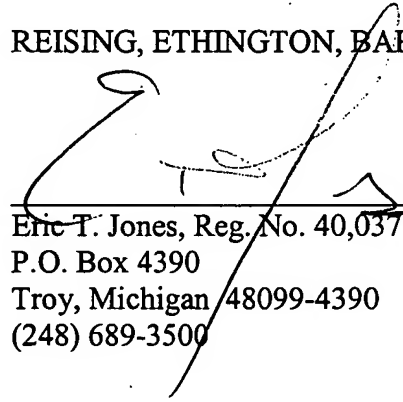
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